

## CHAMPVA POLICY MANUAL

CHAPTER: 2  
SECTION: 18.7  
TITLE: SPECIFIC LEARNING DISORDERS

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AUTHORITY: 38 CFR 17.270(a) and 17.272(a)

RELATED AUTHORITY: 32 CFR 199.4(c)(3)(ix)

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### I. EFFECTIVE DATE

November 13, 1984

### II. DESCRIPTION

A. A specific learning disability means a significant impairment in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, spoken or written, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, or to do mathematical calculations. The specific learning disorders recognized by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th Edition (DSM-IV) include such conditions as perceptual handicaps, brain injury, minimal brain dysfunction, dyslexia, and developmental aphasia. The term does not include children who have learning problems, which are primarily the result of visual, hearing, or motor handicaps, mental retardation, emotional disturbance, or of environmental, cultural, or economic disadvantage.

B. Dyslexia is one of several distinct learning disabilities. It is a specific language based disorder of constitutional origin characterized by difficulties in single word decoding, usually reflecting insufficient phonological processing abilities.

C. Aphasia is an impairment of the ability to use or comprehend words, often the result of a stroke or head injury.

### III. POLICY

Services and supplies, provided in connection with a specific learning disorder are not covered. School referrals for testing are not covered. Services related to suspected academic problems or learning disabilities are not covered. Special education of any type is excluded.

#### **IV. POLICY CONSIDERATIONS**

A. Public Law 94-142, the Education for all Handicapped Children Act, requires school districts to make diagnostic and evaluation services related to specific learning disorders available to all school-age children within the state.

B. Public Law 94-142, also requires the states to provide special education and related services (including speech therapy) for children determined to have a learning disability (specific learning disorder).

C. Coverage for speech therapy for developmental language and articulation disorders is excluded.

D. Psychological testing for diagnosed specific learning disorders is not covered.

**\*END OF POLICY\***